

Appln. No. 09/729,397

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the Specification as published at paragraphs [0032]-[0033] as follows.

[0032] As shown in FIG. 4, a user, in this example a buyer, may disregard the automatic incremental increase in the next sell offer or buy bid shown by the cross hatched section in order to increase the user's individual bid in an amount greater than the one incremental level. To do so, the user moves the screen cursor 435 to the incremental level upon the buy bid selector 360 which represents the user's desired individual buy bid. Herein, the buyer has bypassed the automatic buy bid of \$41.00 and has instead moved the cursor to the \$44.00 increment level upon the buy bid selector 360. The user then initiates an entry signal by conventionally clicking upon the computer mouse left click key. Entry results monetary values in the graphical incremental level are shown in the new buy bid amount identifier window 390. Thus, the user is able to confirm the desired entry both graphically upon the buy bid selector 360 and numerically within the new bid amount identifier window 390. It should be noted that this is accomplished through conventional positioning recognition software by recording the relative x-y position of each element of the bid selector 310 or 360 and correlating it to the relative x-y position of the cursor 435. For example, a cursor position of 450/250 is correlated to the underlying scale wherein an x-y position of 450/250 indicates a bid amount of \$44.00. The user then finalizes entry of the bid amount by moving the cursor 435 to and clicking upon the new buy bid submit button 400.

[0033] As shown in FIG. 5, once the individual buy bid is accepted by the auctioneer the buy bid

Appln. No. 09/729,397

selector 360 and buy current bid amount window 370 are reconfigured to indicate the new buy bid amount of \$44.00. The current buyer identifier window 380 is also updated to indicate that the user's bid has been accepted and therefore that user is the current buyer with the indication of the current buyer being "YOU". The buy bid selector 360 and new buy bid amount identifier 390 are updated to indicate a new automatic incremental increase of one incremental level, i.e. the new buy bid level is increased to \$45.00.

[0034] With reference next to FIG. 6, should the seller user decrease the current individual sell bid amount from \$50.00 to \$47.00, either through a series of automatic transactions or by manually increasing the individual sell bid by more than one incremental level as previously describe through the use of the cursor 435, the spread between the sell current offer amount of \$47.00 and the buy current bid amount of \$44.00 is less than the preferred ten incremental levels. As such, the sell bid selector 310 and the buy bid selector 360 are graphically reconfigured so that the quantity of incremental bid levels and the associated monetary values associated with each incremental level is reduced, as previously discussed the incremental levels may be determined by simply mathematical formulas. Here, the incremental level is reduced from \$1.00 to 50 cents. It should be noted that the incremental level must be equal to or greater than a minimum value set by either market parameters or the seller of the goods. The system automatically changes the incremental level, and possibly the quantity of incremental bids within the spread, so that bidders can refine their bids as the spread decreases. This automatic reconfiguration of the graphics allows users to immediately recognize the narrowing of the spread and to recognize that the bid increments need not be as large. This aids in preventing bidders from unknowingly increasing the next bid beyond a recognized minimal increase.